

## Appendix H: Quality Improvement Strategy (1 of 2)

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Under §1915(c) of the Social Security Act and 42 CFR §441.302, the approval of an HCBS waiver requires that CMS determine that the State has made satisfactory assurances concerning the protection of participant health and welfare, financial accountability and other elements of waiver operations. Renewal of an existing waiver is contingent upon review by CMS and a finding by CMS that the assurances have been met. By completing the HCBS waiver application, the State specifies how it has designed the waiver's critical processes, structures and operational features in order to meet these assurances.

- Quality Improvement is a critical operational feature that an organization employs to continually determine whether it operates in accordance with the approved design of its program, meets statutory and regulatory assurances and requirements, achieves desired outcomes, and identifies opportunities for improvement.

CMS recognizes that a state's waiver Quality Improvement Strategy may vary depending on the nature of the waiver target population, the services offered, and the waiver's relationship to other public programs, and will extend beyond regulatory requirements. However, for the purpose of this application, the State is expected to have, at the minimum, systems in place to measure and improve its own performance in meeting six specific waiver assurances and requirements.

It may be more efficient and effective for a Quality Improvement Strategy to span multiple waivers and other long-term care services. CMS recognizes the value of this approach and will ask the state to identify other waiver programs and long-term care services that are addressed in the Quality Improvement Strategy.

### Quality Improvement Strategy: Minimum Components

The Quality Improvement Strategy that will be in effect during the period of the approved waiver is described throughout the waiver in the appendices corresponding to the statutory assurances and sub-assurances. Other documents cited must be available to CMS upon request through the Medicaid agency or the operating agency (if appropriate).

In the QMS discovery and remediation sections throughout the application (located in Appendices A, B, C, D, G, and I) , a state spells out:

- The evidence based discovery activities that will be conducted for each of the six major waiver assurances;
- The *remediation* activities followed to correct individual problems identified in the implementation of each of the assurances;

In Appendix H of the application, a State describes (1) the *system improvement* activities followed in response to aggregated, analyzed discovery and remediation information collected on each of the assurances; (2) the correspondent *roles/responsibilities* of those conducting assessing and prioritizing improving system corrections and improvements; and (3) the processes the state will follow to continuously *assess the effectiveness of the QMS* and revise it as necessary and appropriate.

If the State's Quality Improvement Strategy is not fully developed at the time the waiver application is submitted, the state may provide a work plan to fully develop its Quality Improvement Strategy, including the specific tasks the State plans to undertake during the period the waiver is in effect, the major milestones associated with these tasks, and the entity (or entities) responsible for the completion of these tasks.

When the Quality Improvement Strategy spans more than one waiver and/or other types of long-term care services under the Medicaid State plan, specify the control numbers for the other waiver programs and/or identify the other long-term services that are addressed in the Quality Improvement Strategy. In instances when the QMS spans more than one waiver, the State must be able to stratify information that is related to each approved waiver program.

## Appendix H: Quality Improvement Strategy (2 of 2)

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### H-1: Systems Improvement

#### a. System Improvements

- i. Describe the process(es) for trending, prioritizing, and implementing system improvements (i.e., design changes) prompted as a result of an analysis of discovery and remediation information.

The Department is using the current QA process as inserted in the text box of the Main section, in 8.B. Updates to the current QA process are referenced in the Summary section of the Major Changes section of the renewal request. The Department updates the QA Review process annually, and will continue to do so as Department policies and procedures are added or refined. New review requirements to be implemented 7/1/08 based on the performance measures outlined in the renewal request may be reviewed in the Quality Improvement sections of the various Appendices.

As outlined in the Major Changes summary section, the Department will submit a waiver amendment request on or before 3/31/10 for the purpose of implementing a fully compliant V3.5 waiver application effective 7/1/10. The Department acknowledges that to adequately address the quality assurance assurance/quality improvement/system change sections of a Version 3.5 waiver application, the Department will need to invest a significant amount of work involving several Department staff and perhaps CMS technical support staff.

ii. **System Improvement Activities**

<b>Responsible Party</b> <i>(check each that applies):</i>	<b>Frequency of Monitoring and Analysis</b> <i>(check each that applies):</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>State Medicaid Agency</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Weekly</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Operating Agency</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Monthly</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Sub-State Entity</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quarterly</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Quality Improvement Committee</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Annually</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> Specify:	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> Specify:

**b. System Design Changes**

- i. Describe the process for monitoring and analyzing the effectiveness of system design changes. Include a description of the various roles and responsibilities involved in the processes for monitoring & assessing system design changes. If applicable, include the State's targeted standards for systems improvement.

The Department has most of the review elements in place today to ensure the performance measures will be adequately monitored. The Department has not developed a method for aggregating this information in a statistical format, nor is the Department prepared to propose a methodology for accomplishing this objective at this time. The time frames specified in H-1.a.i. apply to this activity.

Staff to be involved in this activity will include program specialists involved in QA for children and adult services, waiver staff, representative field staff, and DDP management staff. The ongoing roles and responsibilities of this staff will be identified as the system design unfolds, between now and 3/31/10.

- ii. Describe the process to periodically evaluate, as appropriate, the Quality Improvement Strategy.

The department is not prepared to complete this section at this time. The time frames outlined in H-1.a.i. and H-1.b.i apply to this activity